

**ABSTRACT****AUDIO/VIDEO REPRODUCING APPARATUS AND METHOD**

An audio/video reproducing apparatus is connectable to a communications network for selectively reproducing items of audio/video material from a recording medium in response to a request received via the communications network. The audio/video reproducing apparatus may comprise a control processor operable in use to receive data representing the request for the audio/video material item via the communications network. A reproducing processor is operable in response to signals identifying the audio/video material items from the control processor to reproduce the audio/video material items. The data identifying the audio/video material items includes meta data indicative of the audio/video material items. The meta data may be one of UMID, tape ID and time codes, and a Unique Material Identifier the material items.

To facilitate the identification and selection of the audio and/or video material, an audio and/or video processing apparatus is provided for processing audio and/or video signals representing sound and/or images. The processing apparatus comprises an activity detector operable to generate an activity signal indicative of an amount of activity within the sound/images represented by the audio/video signal, and a meta data generator coupled to the activity detector which is operable to generate sample images at temporal positions within the audio/video signal, which temporal positions are determined from the activity signal. The processing apparatus thereby provides a facility for automatically generating meta data from received audio/video signals. The meta data can be used to select the audio/video material.

25 [Fig 9]